


A circular logo with a teal background. The word "Lewisham" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, and the word "music" is written below it in a smaller, white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

Lewisham  
music

A close-up photograph of a young man with dark hair, wearing a dark blue polo shirt, playing a saxophone. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera. The lighting is dramatic, with strong purple and blue tones, highlighting his face and the brass of the instrument.

# Youth Music's IDEA programme

A Case Study by  
Lewisham Music



Lewisham Music is an award-winning youth charity, and the lead partner for Lewisham Music Education Hub. In partnership with local and national organisations, we deliver and support a range of musical opportunities in schools and community settings across Lewisham with the aim of creating positive change in young people's lives.

## Where were we?

Before we joined the Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, and Accessible (IDEA) programme, it's fair to say that we already saw how Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility had been central in driving positive change in the charity in recent years. This had included:

- A needs analysis
- A series of independent evaluation reviews
- Workforce consultation and training
- The appointment of a Tutor Diversity Ambassador
- Recruitment of four paid Young Producers
- The development of targeted provision for displaced and care experienced children.
- Programmes of youth voice and co-produced activity shaped by young people.



*For more information on our journey prior to joining the IDEA programme please read the Appendix below.*

## What we wanted to achieve

We were delighted to be invited to be one of the Hubs taking part in the IDEA programme. Being a 'Learning Charity' is one of our organisation's values.

***“Education, music, the arts sector and indeed society in general are continually evolving. We strongly believe in the value of training, professional development, and lifelong learning for all our staff. Lewisham Music is committed to our own organisational development, ensuring that our offer stays***

***fresh, relevant, and high-quality. We believe that to achieve the best outcomes for the young people and communities we work with, we should constantly be reviewing, improving, and expanding our offer in a way which is equitable and sustainable.”***



What Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access means and looks like ‘on the ground’ is always changing as communities and the challenges they face evolve. Therefore, being fully inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible is a never-ending journey.

We had made significant progress on many elements of IDEA, however it’s fair to say we focused on the action, rather than the strategic planning! It’s easy to write a strategy, and then neglect the actual action. However, after 3-4 years of significant change and growth since 2019, by the time the IDEA programme came around, we were ready to take stock, reflect, and plan for the next stages in a more considered and strategic way.

It took us a while to focus on what we wanted to achieve and how the

programme could best support us. Firstly, we wanted support with our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. This is something all Hubs were asked to create at the time by Arts Council England (our principal funder), but it made absolute sense to tie this into the IDEA programme.

Secondly, we wanted to develop our work around youth voice and move on from co-produced work and youth leadership towards young people having a central role in our organisation’s structure and informing decision making. We wanted to make sure young people’s voices were being represented on Lewisham Music’s Board (which also acts as the governance group for Lewisham Music Education Hub).

# What we did

## The strategy

We were delighted to partner with Dr. Phil Mullen to support us to write the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. When we started these mentoring sessions, we had a first draft written by Keith Sykes, our Director of Community Programmes. First Phil spent time getting to know the charity in more detail. He then acted as a critical friend as we developed the strategy. This included pointing out the things we had missed out, and the things we could be more ambitious about.



We were happy with the finished version which we felt was much more comprehensive, clear, and meaningful. This is now published [on our website](#). We then discussed with Phil our workforce and their CPD needs and developed a training session called '*Beyond Behaviour Management*' for our staff which made them consider the causes of a young person's behaviour with empathy and a deeper level of understanding.

## The Trustees

Lewisham Music is lucky to have a talented and committed board of trustees. During a previous board audit, the 'gaps' in skills and experiences were clear. This included a desire for more young trustees (defined as

18-30). We wanted the voices of local young people to play a meaningful role in the charity's strategic development and decision making. In addition, we wanted to be part of the change we believe is needed across the charity sector nationally; [Young Trustees Movement](#) have discovered that currently, less than 3% of charity Trustees are under 30. We wanted to invest in the next generation of charity leaders.

With the £2000 funding Youth Music offered as part of the programme, we engaged [Jacob Sakil](#), a local specialist in youth voice, community development and civic engagement who we had worked with before on several Youth Voice programmes. Jacob himself has experience as a board member, in fact he is the youngest ever member of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

Jacob collaborated with us to deliver the following:

- A training session for existing trustees about how best to support new trustees, especially those who are young and have never been a trustee before.
- A significant rewrite of our [trustee information pack](#), with a much clearer explanation of not just what Lewisham Music's does, but what being a trustee means.
- Recruiting two new young trustees, including publicising the opportunity and interviews.
- Induction training for the new trustees.
- Additional follow-up support and mentoring during their first few months on the Board.

We are delighted to have recruited Lateefah Brown and Nadiya Hoffman, both of whom went to school locally, and live in the borough. They expressed a desire to 'give something back' to their community, but also to learn and develop themselves. It's also fair to say that neither of them had really considered becoming a trustee before. They both offered a mix of skills and experience which brilliantly complemented the Board, including knowledge of legal, property, creative content writing and the music industry. They have been highly engaged from the start and have proven a huge asset to the charity.

[You can find out more about Lateefah, Nadiya and all our other wonderful trustees here.](#)



In addition as part of Trustees week in November 2023, we wrote a '[Trustees shout out](#)' article on our website which included an interview with Lateefah. This included the following advice to anyone considering becoming a trustee:

*"Always be honest and not afraid to voice your opinion, your perspective and experience is always valuable. Be proactive in getting involved not just in the community but outside of your local community."*



## **What were the outcomes?**

- A comprehensive strategy which allowed us to consolidate where we were, and will help take our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility work forwards in a strategic and ambitious way.
- A very well-received training and CPD session for our teaching staff.
- Two excellent, highly engaged new trustees who offer our board new perspectives, experiences, and skills.
- A much clearer idea on how to recruit and support new trustees.

# What have we learnt?

- Action to make change is the most important thing, but reflection and written strategies help consolidate and push the action to the next level.
- Many people do not have any idea of what being a trustee entails. Charities should be more ambitious about opening the door for these people.
- We should be brave in engaging young people in decision-making fully and reject tokenism.
- IDEA principles should be the backbone of a charities' mission, not a tag-on.



## Resources

There are loads of great resources and organisations out there who can help charities to strengthen their board:

[Young Trustees Movement](#)

[Queer Trustees](#)

[Getting on Board](#)

[Action for Trustee Racial Diversity UK](#)

[The Charity Commission- the essential trustee, what you need to know, what you need to do](#)





## Appendix – our journey prior to joining the IDEA programme

*Prior to joining the IDEA programme, our work across equity, diversity, inclusion, and access included:*

### Needs analysis

- Taking part in UK Music Masters [I'M IN](#), a self-analysis diversity and inclusion tool.
- Utilising Youth Music's [EDI Self-Assessment Tool](#).
- Using Geo-Mapping to assess 'hot' and 'cold' spots for community engagement.

### Impact measurement/evaluation

- Overhauling our impact measurement and evaluation framework for community programmes and creating an [Impact Hub](#). This included work with research organisations such as [Sound Connections](#), independent evaluators like [Abigail D'Amore](#), and academic research partners such as [Goldsmiths University](#).

### Workforce

- **'Amplifying Voices'**: an ambitious Youth Music-funded initiative in partnership with Greenwich and Lambeth Music Education Hubs and equality consultancy

organisation [BRAP](#). Utilising data, research, roundtable discussions, and tutor training and reflection sessions, the Hubs worked towards a long-term vision and plan of how they can address racial injustices and create a more empowered and diverse workforce.

- **Tutor Diversity Ambassador role:** As part of *Amplifying Voices*, Lewisham, Lambeth, and Greenwich Music Education Hubs appointed a Tutor Diversity Ambassador (TDA) for each organisation in the summer term of 2021. Lewisham then led a successful application to DfE/Music Mark's *Hub Innovation Fund* allowing us to create an ambitious training and mentoring programme for TDAs from 12 London Music Education Hubs (led by [SLS360](#)).
- **Recruitment review:** a complete review and refresh of all processes regarding the recruitment, induction, probation, and retention of Music Tutors who join the charity to ensure that we can attract and retain a more diverse workforce.
- **Specialist staff:** The recruitment of specialist Rap & Lyricism, Music Production/Music Technology and Songwriting tutors.

## Community engagement

- A new community-focused role which increased capacity to build relationships with families and referral organisations.
- Opened and established [The Fellowship](#) as a thriving community centre offering programmes 4 evenings per week in an underserved area of the borough. The rooms were all named [after local artists](#) to inspire young people.

## Access

- Cultivation of significant new referral pathways, including partnerships with housing associations, community organisations, youth services, the Youth Offending Service and Young Carers Service.



- Significantly increasing fundraising capacity to expand bursaries and subsidies from children and young people from low-income families, including a becoming a Hub partner for Awards For Young Musicians' [Furthering Talent](#) programme.

## **New musical offers**

- The creation of new offers in schools and the community including Songwriting, Rap & Lyricism, and music production/music technology. This includes creative programmes allowing young people to make their own music ([Studio Sessions](#)) and create music with their peers ([Fellowship Music Collective](#)).



## **Repertoire**

- A project with Decca Ensemble and [Live Music Now](#) bringing classical chamber concerts to local primary schools featuring music created by Black composers.
- Lewisham Junior Orchestra focused on music by marginalised composers.

## **SEND**

- [Live Music Now](#) delivering musical performances and workshops to Lewisham special schools.
- *Greenvale Open Orchestra*, a partnership with [Open Orchestras](#) and Greenvale school.
- Recruitment of an Accessible Music Technology specialist and purchase of equipment.



## Strategy

- Charly Richardson, CEO of Lewisham Music was heavily involved with Music Mark and the London Hub's Diversity, Representation, Action group. This resulted in a [mini-manifesto](#) published by London Hubs and Music Mark's ground-breaking [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion report](#) by Samantha Spence.

## Communications

- Overhauling our marketing and communications to ensure we are reaching all communities.

## Youth Voice and Co-Production

- ['Musical identity'](#) workshops delivered as part of *'Amplifying Voices'*
- [The Music Lab](#), delivered in partnership with Sound Connections and the University of York explored Youth Voice in classical music, and created a [Toolkit](#) for the sector.
- ['A Big Conversation'](#) – funded by the Greater London Authority and working with Lewisham Youth Theatre, The Albany, Sounds Like Chaos and Heart n Soul, this was a youth-led research and development project exploring the value of the arts and creativity in supporting young people with their mental health, wellbeing and happiness.



- Roundtable consultation events with Phoenix Community Housing’s Youth Advisory Board and Lewisham Youth Council.
- Four paid [Young Producers](#) were trained in conducting youth consultation and research. These young people (aged 16–27) conducted several focus groups and project visits to review young people’s experiences within music education from a peer perspective. Some of these findings were discussed in the award-winning podcast series [Front Line Young Minds](#), which they researched and produced.
- Additional opportunities for young people to co-produce activity through our community programmes and our place-based culture programme ‘*Lewisham Legends.*’

## Targeted programmes

- The award-winning [Sonic Minds](#) programme (funded by Youth-Music) focused on work with young people at risk of poor mental health, including displaced young people/young refugees.
- Partnerships with [Lewisham Virtual School for Looked After Children](#), London Refugee Network, [Fairbeats](#) and [Lewisham College ESOL department](#) to support our understanding of the experiences of children in care and displaced young people.

